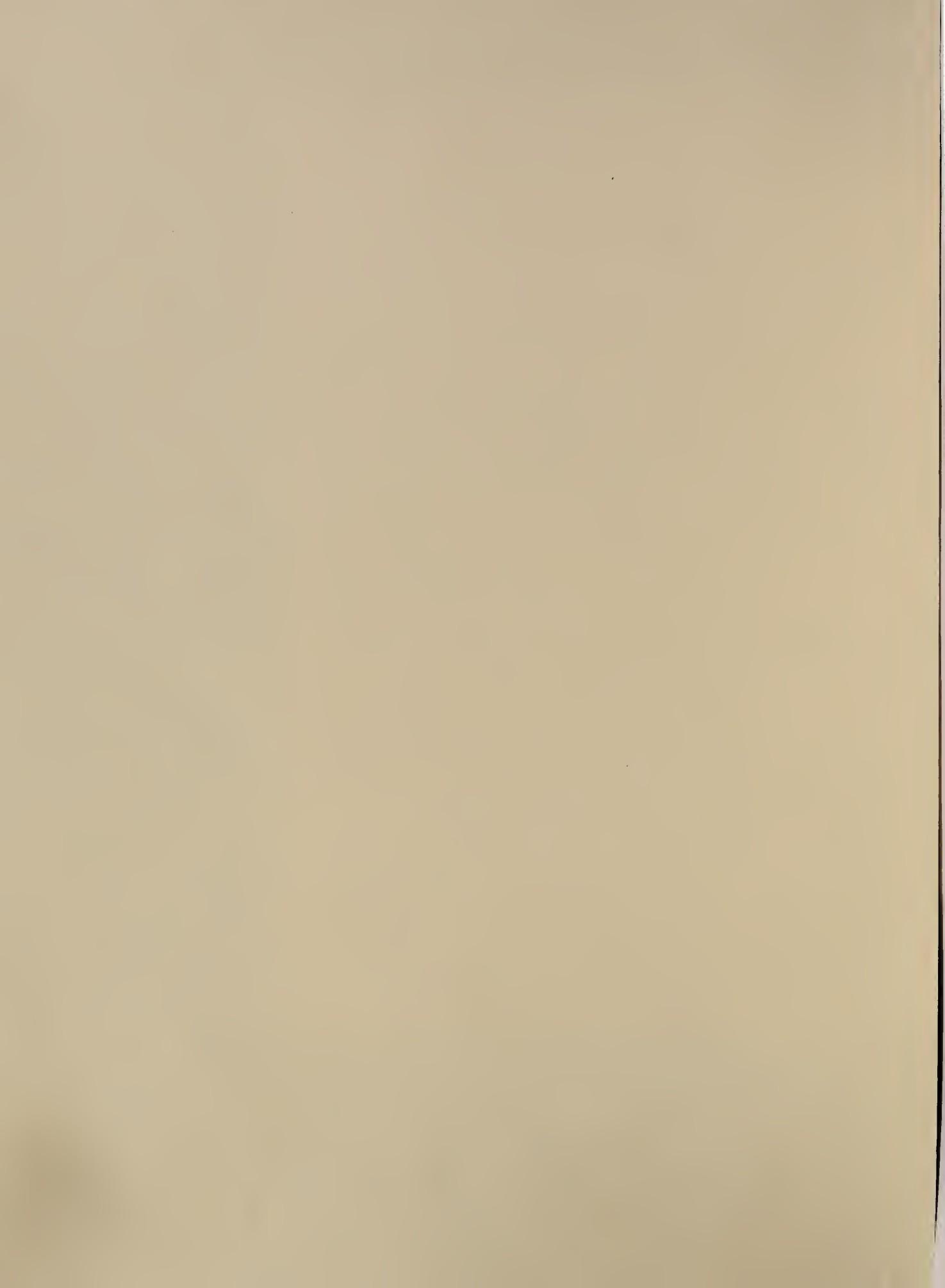


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Farm Broadcasters Letter



CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

Letter No. 2323

July 30, 1987

SOVIET HARVEST LAGS

A Soviet agricultural newspaper noted that harvest progress is significantly lower than last year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. As of July 20, small grains and pulses were cut on 8 million 900 thousand hectares (22.3 million acres) of which 5 million 400 thousand were threshed. One year ago, on July 21, the area of grain cut was nearly three times as much, but not quite half had been threshed. The Soviet press has been highlighting that this year's unusual weather is delaying harvest and very wet conditions in some areas have caused harvesting difficulties. Also delaying the harvest is the fact that more harvest equipment than usual was not repaired and ready for service.

SOVIET SOWS

The preliminary figure for the amount of grain the Soviets have planted this year is 117 million 600 thousand hectares (nearly 300 million acres) according to a report in Pravda. The report also stated more corn-for-grain was planted than last year. In 1986, the preliminary sown area reported by the Soviets for grain was 118 million 100 thousand hectares. The final figure reported, however, was 1½ million hectares fewer, from which a crop of 210 million 100 thousand tons was reported. The U.S. Department of Agriculture currently estimates the 1987 Soviet grain crop at 195 million tons from an area of 115 million hectares.

FEWER U.S. SOYBEANS

U.S. soybean production in 1987 is forecast at 1 billion 900 million bushels, a 5 percent decline from 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The July 9 Crop Production report indicated that farmers had planted 58 million 700 thousand acres of soybeans, down sharply from 61 million 500 thousand in 1986, but 1 million 800 thousand more than farmers said in March they intended to plant. The changes since March were probably prompted by the spring rally in prices.

MAY EXPORTS

The export volume for May 1987 totaled 10 million 400 thousand tons, up 61 percent from the 6 million 400 thousand tons exported during May 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Agricultural export value during May 1987 totaled \$2 billion 200 million, up \$319 million from May 1986. Export volume increases for May 1987 were concentrated in grains and feed products, which were up 4 million 300 thousand tons - that's 120 percent - from May 1986. The biggest volume gainers were wheat, rice, corn, feeds and fodders, barley, raw cotton, poultry products, butter, beef, fresh fruits, citrus juices and alcoholic beverages.

LYNG
OPTIMISTIC

In a speech before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry at a meeting in Vermont, Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng said, "I am happy to report to the Committee that the U.S. farm economy continues to improve. It's true, there are still some farmers who are undergoing financial stress. But net cash farm income, which set a record of \$53 billion in 1986, is forecast to reach between \$52 and \$56 billion this year."

MAY 1987 AND
CUMULATIVE
EXPORTS

In May 1987, several agricultural exports declined from May 1986 levels, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The greatest volume declines were in oilseeds and products, namely soybeans, peanuts and sunflowerseed. The cumulative U.S. agricultural exports during October to May totaled \$18 billion 900 million, down \$205 million or 1 percent from the same period a year earlier. Export volume during the first eight months of fiscal 1987 totaled 85 million 300 thousand tons, up 9 percent from the 78 million 600 thousand tons exported during the first eight months of fiscal 1986.

SOYBEAN PRICES
FOR 1987/88

Soybean prices for 1987/88 are likely to average between \$4.70 and \$5.00 a bushel, near this season's preliminary estimate of \$4.80, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Prices rose during June, averaging \$5.45 a bushel for the month--high enough to prompt sales from the Commodity Credit Corporation. Sales of CCC soybeans totaled about 190 million bushels by early July. However, prices have declined sharply in July.

GLOBAL OILSEED
OUTPUT UP

The declines in U.S. soybean production are being more than offset by rising oilseed production worldwide, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Increases in soybean output are anticipated for Argentina, Brazil and the European Community. The EC is also increasing production of rapeseed and sunflowerseed. Consequently, despite U.S. acreage cutbacks, global oilseed output is expected to reach a record 202 million metric tons.

U.S. RED MEAT
PRODUCTION

The commercial red meat production for the U.S. in June 1987 totaled 3 billion 100 million pounds, down 2 percent from June 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The January to June red meat production was 18 billion 700 million pounds, down 4 percent from last year. (For statistical state-by-state information, call 202-447-6880.)

DAIRY
TERMINATION
CONTINUES

An estimated 6,000 head of dairy cattle were slaughtered in federally-inspected plants during the week ending July 11 as a result of the Dairy Termination Program, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The cumulative total of cattle slaughtered under the program from April 1, 1986, through July 11, 1987, is an estimated 1,140,000 head. Dairy cattle reported for export under the program totaled an estimated 60,578 head.

FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE

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CURRENT AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK...Net cash income for farmers increased last year by \$6 billion over year-ago figures, and income this year is expected to remain steady to higher. USDA economist Herb Moses reviews the latest agricultural outlook for the U.S. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (246)

DAIRY OUTLOOK...Production of butter, nonfat dry milk, and American cheese has been sharply squeezed between lower milk production and increased quantities of milk needed to meet sales of other products. USDA economist Jim Miller examines the dairy situation and outlook. Vic Powell interviews. (247)

WORLD FOOD NEEDS AND AVAILABILITIES...In Sub-Saharan Africa cereal shortfalls are estimated at 4 million tons, nearly double last year's needs. Food needs will also increase in West and Central Africa. USDA economist Ray Nightingale takes a look at world food needs and availabilities. Vic Powell interviews. (248)

RURAL REGENERATION INITIATIVE...The economic forces at the world and national level have their impact on rural areas. The "Six-Point Rural Regeneration Initiative" is an effort to address these problems. Robert Lovan with USDA's Extension Service outlines this program. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (249)

RURAL REGENERATION INITIATIVE - II...Robert Lovan with USDA's Extension Service continues his discussion on the six-point rural regeneration initiative program and the type of assistance it offers to rural families. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (250)

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1574...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) The United States is a big donor of food aid to countries in the third world, particularly Africa, where drought, lack of capital and few skilled workers have all combined to keep Africa a food aid country rather than a food exporter. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, George Holmes Takes a look at why Africa is struggling for agricultural survival.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1563...(Weekly news features) USDA news highlights; Conservation compliance update; Save the farm land; England's import market.

CONSUMER TIME #1054...(Weekly 2½-3 min features) Lawn diseases; Grass seed shortage; Planning a nice lawn; Choosing cantaloupes; Choosing a watermelon.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Tues, Aug. 11, World agricultural supply demand, Weekly crop and weather; Wed, Aug. 12, World crop production, World oilseed situation, World cotton, World grain, Farm income; Tues, Aug. 18, Weekly crop & weather. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

OFF MIKE

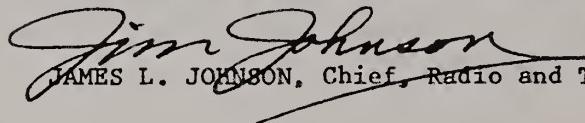
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Paul Pippert (WIBW, Topeka, KS) is back from his two-week work trip in Europe. Actually, the first week was the Ciba-Geigy tour that Paul participated in as last year's "Farm Broadcasters of the Year". And a working trip it was. He says he produced three live half-hour programs and brought back enough taped material for a number of additional programs. He rates the trip as a 10-plus. Incidentally, Paul has a special request. If you have matchbooks emphasizing the farm broadcasting at your station or network, send him two or three. You'll have to ask him why he wants them ... You may have noticed a new voice on our USDA Radio News Service lately. She's Laurie Blankenship, and she's summer interning with us until late August ... And speaking of our own, Brenda Curtis has been limping around the office the past couple days, thanks to a cortisone shot in her heel administered because of some bone spurs. She got the shot on Friday, and it took three days for the soreness to calm down. But this morning she said her leg had never felt better ... Note from Walt Shaw with a

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U.S. Department of Agriculture
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new phone number and address for his station KRAK in Sacramento, CA: 1436 Auburn Blvd (zip 95815), and 916-923-9200 ... Our hat is off to Jim Evans and his information staff at University of Illinois. Last year Jim volunteered to continue the Oscars in Agriculture program when it looked like the program would be dropped for budgetary reasons. Jim's staff conducted the program in a highly professional manner and provided the six judges with a goodly measure of hospitality. The judges had their work cut out for them but met the deadline (and flight times). The judges were Donald Dilworth (former director of advertising, Deere & Co.); Dix Harper (WRAL/Tobacco Net, Raleigh, NC); John Harvey (Du Pont Agricultural Products, Wilmington, DE); Jean Rice (Gold Kist, Atlanta, GA); Richard Lee (University of Missouri, Columbia, MO) and yours truly (USDA, Washington, D.C.).


JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief, Radio and Television Division